

Insert to Stage 2 Disinfection Byproducts Sampling Plan: Operational Evaluation Level, or OEL

Insert this page into your approved Stage 2 Initial Distribution Evaluation Standard Monitoring Plan Report. It lists the required elements of the Operational Evaluation Level, or OEL.

6A. Calculation of the Operational Evaluation Level

Operational Evaluation Level or OEL

The Operational Evaluation Level is a calculation required when a system is approaching the MCL. The purpose is to take action to reduce the disinfection byproduct levels in the system before a DBP MCL violation occurs. This is how it is calculated, but as with the DBP monitoring, the DNR will calculate the OEL and notify the system if a report is required.

- If a system is on annual monitoring, calculating compliance with the OEL is not required.
- For systems on quarterly monitoring, if a single quarterly result is at or above 0.080 mg/L for TTHM or 0.060 mg/L for HAA5, the Operational Evaluation Level (OEL) must be calculated for that quarter and for the next three quarters. The calculation is as follows:

$$\text{OEL} = \frac{(2 \times \text{current quarter's result}) + \text{last two quarterly results}}{4}$$

If the OEL calculated value exceeds the MCL, the system has exceeded the OEL for that sample location and must conduct the following:

1. Conduct an operational evaluation to determine the cause of the exceedances;
2. Submit a written report of that evaluation to the DNR within 90 days of being notified of the OEL exceedances by DNR; and
3. Keep a copy of the operational evaluation report and make it available to the public upon request.

Required OEL Report elements: The report must contain an examination of the system treatment and distribution operational practices that may contribute to TTHM and HAA5 formation, including:

- Storage tank operations;
- Excess storage capacity;
- Distribution system flushing practices;
- Source water quality;
- Sources of supply;
- Treatment processes; and
- Finished water quality.

The report must also include what steps could be considered to minimize future exceedances.

The system may make a request to DNR to limit the scope of the examination if the cause(s) of the OEL exceedances is identified. The 90-day period cannot be extended. The DNR must approve the limited scope allowance in writing and the written approval must be kept with the completed report.

An OEL exceedance is not a health-based standard violation, although failure to conduct the required actions or submit the OEL report are reporting violations.

The EPA Guidance Manual for Conducting the Operational Evaluation is available at this website:

http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/disinfection/stage2/pdfs/draft_guide_stage2_operationalevaluation.pdf